

(b) and (c) In each case, the concerned States were immediately advised not to use the remaining vials of the same batch and samples from the batch were sent for testing in one case, sample was found to be of satisfactory quality and in other case the test result is yet to be received. The vials under reference were supplied by M/s. BIBCOL in the previous financial year i.e. 2005-06.

I may, however, be mentioned here that in the current financial year, this Ministry has not received any consignment of OPV from M/s. BIBCOL. The Ministry has asked M/s. BIBCOL to first get a Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) certificate from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) specifying that their manufacturing process fully complies with the revised schedule M of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules. The acceptance of further supply would be subject to the receipt of the GMP certificate under Schedule M.

Visually impaired children

2654. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of visually impaired children in the country goes up by 1 lakh every year, according to WHO;

(b) whether it is also a fact that an Associate Professor of Computational and Visual Neurosciences in the Department of Brain at Cognitive Science at MIT, USA has opined that many visually impaired children in India can be cured and that due to lack of awareness or due to financial constraints they were not being addressed; and

(c) if so, the steps Government are considering to address the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) As per Bulletin of the WHO/November, 2004, 82(11), there are 3.90 Lakh Visually Impaired children (Below the age of 15 years) in India with prevalence rate of 0.08%.

According to Dr. R.P. Centre for Ophthalmic sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi Visual Impairment among children are constant over the last five years. The available evidences prove that the blindness among children due to infective and nutritional causes has declined over the period.

(b) and (c) There is no authentic information on the opinion of Professor of Computational and Visual neurosciences in the Department of Brain at Cognitive Science at MIT, USA about visual impaired children in India. However, childhood blindness is one of the focused area under the National Programme for Control of Blindness. Steps being taken under the Programme for prevention and control of Childhood blindness during the Tenth five year plan are:—

- (i) to provide eye glasses to about 1.5 million children having significant refractive errors.
- (ii) To develop 50 paediatric ophthalmology Units at tertiary level.
- (iii) To train at least 200 eye specialities in various sub-specialities of ophthalmology including paediatric Ophthalmology.
- (iv) To develop IEC for paediatric ophthalmology.

Non-availability of basic medicines

2655. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to a report given by Oxfam, two people out of every three in India do not get even the basic medicines like Paracetamol;

(b) if so, the reasons for denial of the basic facilities like medicines; and

(c) the steps Government are considering to address the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Basic amenities in PHCs and CHCs

2656. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a survey conducted by National Sample Survey Organization